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DIRECTORATE OF  
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# *WEEKLY SUMMARY*

## *Special Report*

*Extremism in Brazil*

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### EXTREMISM IN BRAZIL

Since early last year, Brazil has witnessed a sharp increase in urban terrorism, armed robbery, and threats to US government and business personnel. The country's police agencies until recently have had little success in rounding up those responsible for the violence, and Brazil's move to outright authoritarian government on 13 December has not slowed the trend to lawlessness.

Extremist groups of both the left and right are responsible for the wave of urban violence. On the left, the Marighella band of dissident Communists has been especially active. Leftist extremist groups assumed to be Marighellistas have used robbery and terrorism to raise funds, to demonstrate to those ripe for exploitation that opposition to the government exists, and to stimulate dissension within the government. In reaction, rightist extremism is also on the rise, and several right-wing groups are engaged in terrorism. The presence of such groups on both the right and left sometimes makes the assignment of responsibility for a particular act extremely difficult.

Extremist-inspired violence is essentially urban, increasingly bold, and likely to continue. Despite stringent security laws and the fragmentation and divisions among the groups, the government has been unable to curb the violence. The proscription in December of democratic channels of opposition to the government is bound to drive even more Brazilians toward extremism. Violence attributed to leftist groups provokes counterviolence by rightists and vice versa. A continuation of terrorist acts will prove embarrassing to the administration and will strengthen the hand of those hard liners in the government who believe that President Costa e Silva should be more vigorous in wielding his powers of repression.

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### BACKGROUND

Brazil's wave of bombings, weapons thefts, bank robberies, and assassinations has been an urban phenomenon. Most of the bombings, for example, have occurred in Sao Paulo, with extremists very active also in Rio de Janeiro and to a somewhat lesser degree in Recife, Porto Alegre, and other large Brazilian cities.

There were over thirty bombings or bombing attempts in Sao Paulo between March and December 1968. Most of the explosions occurred in the early morning hours—perhaps to avoid needless deaths. At times, however, bystanders have been injured or killed, and in several cases damage

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to buildings has been considerable. Among the targets have been US government and business offices, police and army headquarters, public utilities, newspapers and commercial offices, and a Soviet consulate.

In the ten-month period, a US Army captain in Sao Paulo and a West German officer in Rio were gunned down in the street. An attempt was made on the living quarters of the US defense attaché in Rio, and the residence of the state secretary of health in Sao Paulo was bombed. Terrorists shot at the residence of liberal Archbishop Dom Helder Camara in Recife and kidnaped for a few hours a former diplomat in the Goulart administration. In addition to this type of attack, many criminals have been slain in Rio and Sao Paulo, ostensibly by a band of police officers that the press labels the "Death Squad." Sao Paulo has suffered from a record number of bank and payroll holdups, many of which have been traced to Communist-line revolutionary groups. Even more alarming are the continuing thefts of arms and explosives.

There is every indication that many groups are responsible for the violence. Considerable evidence suggests that groups such as the Marighellistas are using bank robberies as a means of financing their "revolution" for Brazil. It seems unlikely, however, that Communists would bomb a "New Left" theater or fire shots into the residence of a liberal Catholic archbishop.

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